

Dear Director:

This letter is to give you a preliminary look at what to expect during the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS) on-site visit from the state monitoring team this year. \_\_\_\_\_ is scheduled for its on-site validation visit on \_\_\_\_\_. We will be conducting the activities outlined below.

### **Meetings with Steering Committee**

At the beginning of the visit, there will be an Orientation Meeting with your Steering Committee. We will present an overview of the 5-year UPIPS cycle and the on-site visit activities. **The Steering Committee is encouraged to address any areas of strength, concern, or recommendations from the Self Assessment Report they would like us to attend to as we visit schools.** At the end of the visit, the validation team will hold an Exit Meeting with the Steering Committee and/or others you invite. A short verbal overview of the findings will be presented at that time.

### **Interviews**

During the visit, the state's monitoring specialist will interview the special education director.

In addition, team members will interview a school administrator, special education teacher(s), and general education teacher(s) at each school site. The team will need space at the school to conduct the interviews and the student focus group(s). During the visit, interview and file review time will also be scheduled for related service providers.

### **Focus Groups & Surveys**

At each secondary site visited, a special education teacher will be asked to gather a group of 3-6 secondary students for a focus group.

We are planning to conduct a parent focus group on \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_. A written survey will also be sent to a sample of parents of students with disabilities in your LEA soon after your on-site visit.

### **Student Record Review**

**Files will be selected from caseload lists that the teachers will need to have ready for the review team.** They are chosen to represent various disability categories, ages, and settings. Files for students with a home language other than English will be selected also.

The special education director is requested to provide the Monitoring Specialist with at least one file that contains:

- **a written notice of refusal to take an action**
- **record of a disciplinary action considered or implemented**
- **a Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan**
- **an addendum or notation of ESY services selected**
- **student whose primary home language is documented as other than English**
- **student evaluated but not eligible**

- **LRBI level 3 or 4 interventions**
- **Student in state custody/special education student**
- **Youth in custody/special education student**
- **Student with surrogate parent at IEP meeting**
- **Student with an Orientation and Mobility assessment**

If you would like to have the special education case manager sit with the reviewer during the record review to learn first-hand what is found, we are happy to accommodate that request. The file reviewer needs a room with a table for the team's computer and access to electricity. This room will need to be separate from the interview room.

### **Special Education Administrator Interview**

The special education director interview will take place the morning of the first day of the validation visit. If this is not convenient, please let me know and the schedule can be adjusted. Please plan to have available:

- **Staff listing, preschool through high school, by assignment and FTE percentage.**
- **Staff qualifications, including those on letters of authorization.**
- **LRBI Committee records, including emergency contacts.**
- **Information about current caseloads per each staff member.**

### **Classroom Observations**

If time is available, team members may ask to visit special education and general education classrooms to observe specific specialized instruction. The classrooms visited will be chosen in advance by the principal and/or special education director to minimize disruption to the learning environment. Observers will look at specific student IEPs before conducting observations.

### **Other Information for the Visiting Team**

The team will also need:

- **A caseload list for each teacher including the disability category, current IEP date, and date of most recent evaluation/reevaluation.**
- **A caseload list for related service personnel including all the above elements.**
- **Class schedules for secondary schools being visited.**

Please have this information available during the Orientation Meeting.

A final schedule for the visit will be worked out with you by \_\_\_\_\_. Please call me at (801) 538-7898 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ms. Glenna Gallo, Monitoring Specialist  
Special Education Services Unit